

Interview with Mary Bowen

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Program
Foreign Service Spouse Series

MARY BOWEN

Interviewed by: Jewell Fenzi

Initial interview date: September 18, 1991

Q: This is Jewell Fenzi on September 18, 1991, I am interviewing Mary Bowen at my home, in Washington, DC. We are going to talk about the situation she finds herself in the Foreign Service, and that is being midway between the senior, more traditional spouses who had few if any personal career aspirations, and the younger spouses she encounters who are perhaps more interested in their own professional career than in their spouse's role as a Foreign Service Officer.

Let me ask you, since I didn't have time to research it, what was the situation in Zaire in '77?

BOWEN: There was Shaba 1 and Shaba 2. There were a lot of difficulties in the country while we were there. There was a drought, so the economy was very bad. Fortunately, we were, I believe on home leave during one of the civil wars [pause to adjust recording equipment] "Shaba" was the common name for the insurrection, which was a small civil rebellion in the south-central part of the country. It happened twice during our stay but Mobutu had enough control. It was put down after a short time.

Q: Was Joanne born there?

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BOWEN: Andrew was. I arrived with a one-year-old, and then he was born while I was there. I had flown on a missionary plane to Kenya, Nairobi, when I was seven months pregnant and stayed there in a family hotel. I took my daughter with me and my mother met me. My husband had to keep working, so I took a taxi to the hospital where (she laughs) it was time, and had my son. It was funny, because my mother had contacted the Embassy in Nairobi and asked them to radio to Bukavu because there was no telephone contact; the whole country of Zaire didn't pay their long-distance phone bills, so they had no such phone capability. The Embassy said, we'll send a cable. Cables only went to Kinshasa and then by pouch to Bukavu, which would have taken a very long time. Finally radio contact was established — Andrew was born on a Friday and John was able to get a Saturday plane and arrive that day.

Q: Wonderful. Did you go right back to Zaire then?

BOWEN: We waited about a week, the time interval the doctor thought right before the baby should travel. My mother, who was in her 70s, was able to see a little of the country.

Q: Bukavu was a Consulate then? BOWEN: Yes, a two-man post. It has since been closed. When we left they turned it into an AID post, I believe; it's no longer a Consulate.

Q: It was quite something, wasn't it, to be in a small place like that in the interior of Zaire.

BOWEN: Yes. Of all the places I've been, we have more stories of Bukavu. My favorite one involves my husband. Since he was Consul, there was an official residence, with two gardeners and two night watchmen, for security mostly. Every night the watchman started his little fire in his little house by rubbing two sticks together. I had no idea that people still did that. I guess because he couldn't afford the price of matches. They were not made locally; if we saw them in a store, they came from outside Zaire. Perhaps such things were manufactured in Kinshasa, but there was no infrastructure so no way for anything made elsewhere in Zaire to get to where we were.

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For this very reason we felt quite safe during the little insurrections. We were so far away and there were no roads to where these events were happening. We weren't affected immediately, though the mail practically stopped and plane flights, normally irregular anyway, became even more so.

Q: How big was Bukavu?

BOWEN: I think it was 200,000 — a large city. There were other Consulates — the Belgian, of course; the Germans had an honorary consul; the French had a library, sort of like our USIS, and a few people in something like our Peace Corps. But I think there were just three official Consuls and one not a career person.

Q: No American Women's Club?

BOWEN: (laughing) No. And no American school.

Q: What did you do with your time? Other than take care of two babies.

BOWEN: That's basically what I did. I spent a lot of time with my children. I was fortunate in having two babies while I was there, because then I had something to do. There was a certain amount of social life, with some entertaining. My husband had a number of different functions and that fills up a day — if you're helping to prepare and you attend a luncheon and that sort of thing. But I really did nothing else. I did a lot of reading, and walking. I took my children on lots of walks in strollers.

Actually, shopping was rather a major effort. Since the country had such terrible economic problems, and since no ways existed to move things from one part of the country to another, we had a storeroom in the house. We had brought a consumable allotment with us but just getting in the food for only three or four people was an effort; time-consuming, because you had to go from one little shop which wouldn't have anything to another. No

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big supermarket to provide once-a-week marketing. Even if you went two or three times a week it was often frustrating because you wouldn't find things you needed.

Q: And when you did find them, you bought canned things!

BOWEN: (laughing) You bought all you could, right.

Q: And that tour was two years?

BOWEN: Yes. We had been in Bogota before. My daughter was born there.

Q: What was the drug scene like in the 1970s?

BOWEN: We were there before the drug scene. Crime has always been a problem in Bogota the city. When we were there diplomats had no problem, we felt safe personally, but the heads of large companies — Sears and other multinational corporations were being kidnapped and held for ransom. That was a problem during our tour. There were a lot of student-type riots, for instance. One heard of shootings because of emerald dealings and such but not yet for drugs.

And thievery was very prevalent. You didn't leave your house empty for even an afternoon. We had an apartment but most people in houses had two servants: if one went shopping and the residents had to leave, they'd make sure the other servant remained in the house. Or on a Sunday afternoon, typically the maid's day off, there were always two maids who alternated days off every other Sunday. You just couldn't leave a house or a building empty for even 30 or 40 minutes or it probably would be robbed.

Q: So it really wasn't violent crime, it was just nuisance crime.

BOWEN: Right. At that time it wasn't really violent crime. We were told that if someone entered your home to rob you, if they had arms they would certainly use them and you should let them take whatever they wanted.

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Q: *"Take my VCR!"*

BOWEN: (laughing) That was before VCRs.

Q: *"Take my radio." "Take my TV." Well, you had babies in out-of-the-way places, didn't you? Bogota in 1974 was a little bit out of the way. I had been there in 1972 and even in those days bands of little children were roaming the streets.*

BOWEN: We heard stories that there were schools to train the children to steal.

Q: *We heard that too, I suppose from someone at the Embassy. But they were tiny little children in the late 1970s. Was it abroad or in Washington that you noticed you were maybe in the middle, between the two types of spouses who were content to be traditional supportive Foreign Service spouses and then the new younger group?*

BOWEN: Probably. I remember being frustrated in Bogota before I had children looking for work, finding sort of a career path. That was before the Service encouraged spouses to work in embassies. I did have secretarial skills and I remember going to the personnel officer in the Embassy and applying for a job. I was willing to do anything, I just wanted to work. I had no children yet, I was "fresh" out of school and had worked before. I'd been out of school a few years but I was not encouraged. And later talking to a secretary who said, when I told her I had applied, she said what a shame, they'd flown someone down TDY to work, and it was something that I was probably capable of doing. So the Department was not yet aware of the resources that they had in spouses at post. Once I started having children, I think that was when I sort of put a career to one side.

Q: *Did you manage to work at all in Bogota?*

BOWEN: Yes. I did teach English as a second language in a Colombian school for one semester. I did some substitute teaching at the American School there. On my own I did

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a little freelance translating for a neighbor-translator who had extra work. And I did some tutoring with individual students, Americans and others.

Q: But it was really at your first post you began realizing that something had to be done about some sort of career path.

BOWEN: Yes. Because I think I was frustrated then, and I realized that if my husband was going to be in the Foreign Service, I would have to be adaptable, I couldn't just do whatever I thought I wanted to do or whatever I could do. There would always be blocks to what you wanted to do. But then eventually, with children, that took care of that.

Q: Changed it for a while. And then in Brasilia — how old were the children — they were still with you then, very much so.

BOWEN: Yes. And at that point I was able to start working again. I had more regular jobs. In Bukavu I did some private tutoring. While I was in the U.S. there were just too many children and they were too little for me to go out and work. At that time I would have been entry level and doing almost anything, and child care is expensive.

Q: No point in doing anything, under those circumstances.

BOWEN: No. And especially I had come to feel that, moving around the way we do, it's important for the children to have something stable. That can be difficult if both parents work. You have to go to a new country and leave them. One of the difficulties — when I first went to Brasilia, I started working right away in the Embassy, and even though my youngest was in pre-school there was still some time when I was leaving them with a caretaker who spoke a language they didn't speak, and it wasn't easy for them to adjust to my working even though I was usually working only part-time.

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Q: Has anyone done any studies of the effect on the Foreign Service child of being taken from post to post and being left with a caretaker in Portuguese and then a caretaker in Spanish and one in Hindi or — I wonder — it can't be easy for them.

BOWEN: It must be difficult. It's hard enough for them sometimes if one parent is home with them at all times, it's hard just to make new friends and to move. So I can imagine that the tandem couples, or any single parent, any of them would have a very difficult time; the children would have a difficult time.

Q: The only advantage for the single parent is that the child care is less of a problem abroad, so once the child is older and in school and only needs after school care, it's easier for the single parent to have that cohesive support at most posts.

BOWEN: The friendship, and the fact that you're in a family environment. If you live in a compound, usually you feel safe about your neighbors and there's a sense of security; I can see how that's true. My children are now 12, 14 and 15, and they're old enough to be left alone, but you still wonder. In a post like Brasilia there would be someone at home, a caretaker.

Q: You mention the family environment at posts abroad. That's one of the things that was brought up when I spoke at FSI recently, the concern that there are so many single people in the Service now, and so many differences in the family unit at posts. They wondered if in that respect the Service was being representative of the United States, but you've just mentioned the family atmosphere and cohesiveness.

BOWEN: In some posts it's definitely there. In Brasilia we were young parents of children, and in our 30s, and we had friends who were single, friends who were single and much older, single and much younger, friends married and childless, and friends with older children, younger children. We felt they were our best friends and neighbors and part of our family. I think that, depending on the post, and the times.

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Q: Brasilia, of course, is so isolated, you really had to depend on one another, didn't you? You had wonderful weather most of the time, a great outdoor life for children. It used to seem to me, when I came up from Recife, that there was a great inter-dependence at the post because there was nothing else.

BOWEN: Nothing else!

Q: I always felt that Brasilia had no dirty, smelly corners to explore.

BOWEN: That's right, it was unique in that aspect. We've just come from Paris and there was not the family atmosphere there. It was a much larger post and we still think of Brasilia — the friends we made there are closer than those we've made since then, even though they're more removed in time. And the friends we made before Brasilia are not as close as the friends in Brasilia. There were enough people so you really could find someone that you had things in common with, yet you were isolated — as you said, there was nothing else to do.

Q: How many times could you go to Oro Pretu (18th century town), lovely to see, and I suppose every time relatives came you probably saw it again. Recife, on the other hand, really did have a lot of old culture but not very many Americans, so we just had to learn Portuguese. A very small post — two people; there were supposed to be three and of cours(laughing) they got three just as we left. But it was very interesting. But Paris I'm sure — did you live in Neuilly?

BOWEN: We lived in the VIIth, right by the Eiffel Tower. Neuilly is just a compound. I think the people who lived in the compound felt more of this sense of community than we did, because I had friends who lived there and I had that feeling, more like in Brasilia; since you're living together, you see your neighbors more often.

Q: Let's put on tape the positions that you held and how you've moved forward — how you have consciously developed a portable career and developed an interest to fill up your

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hours abroad now that your children are older and probably at your next post you'll leave one or two behind to go to college. And life will change again!

BOWEN:(laughing) I don't know if what I've done was "conscious".

Q: It just sort of happened? On paper it looks very carefully planned out. We can work backwards from Paris — substitute teacher, American School in Paris; receptionist, Paris — well, I suppose "substitute teacher, American School in Paris" seems to tie in more closely with things that you did before.

BOWEN: That is a very portable type of work, something that I learned when I was in Washington before we went overseas. It's something you can do with a college degree if you like working with young people; you can do this almost anywhere in the world where there's an American school, or there doesn't have to be an American school, basically. But that is something I've done because I've had experience in it and it's temporary. You can do this for a year and then move on. I think that except for Bukavu I probably have been a substitute teacher at each post.

Q: I notice that in Brasilia you were secretary for the AID Director for two years. And then librarian of the Embassy tape club and a substitute teacher. And then you've always been active in the American Women's clubs. You find them valuable?

BOWEN: Yes, in Brasilia especially. At our first post, Colombia, I attended the meetings but, you know, it's a learning process, I guess I had to learn how to fill my time and what sorts of things were available. I felt I learned a lot of that in Brasilia, because as well as working, I ended up doing what Brasilia offers, which is sport. So I went horseback riding, and I learned tennis, and did swimming and outdoors sports activities. For that it was absolutely wonderful —

Q: You're outside all year long.

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BOWEN: The weather is perfect, and instruction in a lot of activities is not expensive. I could afford tennis and horseback lessons. When I went to Paris I tried to continue that sort of life style but it didn't work. So it's another country, and I was fortunate enough to find a group through the parents' association at the school that met almost every Friday when school was in session, and they had a French woman who was a professional tour guide who took this group to different historic tourist sites in Paris.

For the entire three years we did this, one of the most wonderful experiences I've had. The first year we did the more obvious places. Then we visited the less well-known, and the more hidden towards the end.

Q: A wonderful education, really.

BOWEN: Yes, I thought so.

Q: You could go back and be a guide in Paris! (laughter)

BOWEN: If I could remember everything she said, which I can't, that's the trouble. But I did find the American Women's groups very helpful. Once I learned that I have to go out and make friends and become involved, to sort of make your own little life, because your life changes every two years, as you know. We learn at different speeds what we have to do, and at my first two posts I really didn't know that.

Q: As you say, even going from Brasilia to Paris, you expect to take your activities with you, automatically you take your life style to the next post with you. And there can be frustration when that doesn't work out and you have to find new activities to take the place of familiar ones.

BOWEN: And if you have children, with their ages that all changes. So your life is sort of different at each place because of that. I imagine if you merely stayed in the U.S. your life would change in certain degrees, too.

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Q: Oh I'm sure it does. The minute your children go to school and you have a half day, are free from nine to two for the first time in six years, or eight or ten, depending on how many children you have, you suddenly have freedom. (laughter) I always felt I was terribly fortunate in having someone for almost all of the 30 years to do housework for me. You know, anyone who will do anything domestic for me I will embrace whole-heartedly, and I really felt that liberated us if you made use of that time.

BOWEN: True. That was another one of the nicer things about Brasilia. But also, for someone used to working and used to taking care of their home, you have to train yourself what you're going to do with the time that you've been liberated for.

Q: Absolutely, absolutely. And therefore, for women who come into the Service now who have been on some kind of career track and suddenly find themselves in Bukavu, without children, it must be very hard.

BOWEN: I think so.

Q: It must be very hard. Because our expectations — when I went to a post like Freetown the Department really had not had time to think out the problems of families in the new African countries, no one had come back from Freetown, we were the second group out after independence — the housing was wrong, all the AID people with no children lived on the school bus route and we didn't. You had to learn to fill up a lot of time.

BOWEN: It's true.

Q: Did your husband entertain at home, or mostly business luncheons? Probably different in Paris than in Brasilia.

BOWEN: Each place it was different. In Paris he had business luncheons in restaurants, so I had very little to do with his entertaining. We did some representational entertaining but very little in our home in Paris. In Brasilia we did a lot of representational entertaining

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but the Brazilians entertained were also our friends, so it was more like having friends over because they were people my husband worked or dealt with and we were anxious to know their families. As you know, Brazilians are such wonderful people.

Q: And great family people, too.

BOWEN: Yes. We could have a 'feijoada' or a Saturday afternoon picnic or barbecue and invite the entire family — often three generations — and it was representational entertaining but it was still a family environment and it was being with your friends.

Q: What a nice way to do representation, and to be able to do it so informally. As Brazilians were — in Recife they were terribly informal.

BOWEN: Yes, in Brasilia too. In Bukavu representational entertaining was more formal. I remember having a few very large cocktail parties, the Fourth of July especially, the people invited not necessarily people I knew. And fortunately the staff, who came with the house, knew how to [do] everything, so there could be a party for 200 people and I, who didn't know how to do any of it, didn't have to, I just sort of hovered around and tried to help. I had to go out and purchase everything but there was a cook who told me what to buy and he was a wonderful creative person, who could make everything from scratch since you had to there: you couldn't buy anything already made. He made potato chips from scratch, he made his own mayonnaise of course, every kind of sauce — wonderful French or Belgian sauces, whichever they were; European-style cooking. He had wonderful lunches and hors d'oeuvres for our cocktail parties. I was lucky in not having to do it all, because I had no idea how to do any of it. And I still had two little toddlers, or a baby and a toddler most of the time. So that was the one time we did do more formal entertaining.

Q: I really never had any complaints about not having enough representation money. In Recife, for instance, we'd have the whole staff, including my husband's driver, rolling out dough and stuffing eggs. And like you I would have done all the shopping and then let the

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cook more or less direct things. They'd party while they were working, and then they would pitch right in and make sure that the real party went off well. Well, I enjoyed it and I think you did too. I just keep coming back to how you've been teaching, and library-ing, and just this continual thought — not really a terribly great effort but just always looking out for the opportunity to stay in some sort of career track in teaching, and now library. The reason I'm interested is because I feel that's the solution to a Foreign Service life these days.

BOWEN: It's good if you can find a portable career. I think that's the best. Or if you have something that you can do at an Embassy — if you have secretarial skills or are a Foreign Service Officer. But not everyone has a portable career, and I can see how it would be difficult.

Q: Could you develop a portable career out of law, or architecture, or medicine, in some way?

BOWEN: I think anyone who's creative, who is not resentful of what they're doing and who wants to, probably could. As for architecture, if there's a certain time when you can't work at what you're doing, you can study it, you can at least study whatever is where you are. I think the State Department helps women. When I came back they offered a course for spouses on finding jobs. It was a five-day course and the main theme was finding jobs in Washington, but they had a separate section — an afternoon, with Q&A period — for people who were going overseas. But I think the FLO office gives quite a lot of help for people who really want to work. The problem is that if there's a certain field you want to work in, you may not be able to work in it, you may have to be adaptable. And then you find something else to do. You have to draw from yourself and develop other interests as well as just one career path. But I think the Department helps a lot, give a lot of information on jobs.

Q: Do you think your generation by and large has benefited from this?

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BOWEN: Oh I think so. I think at least in the last few years. When I was in Brazil I do remember other spouses my age sort of complaining that the only types of jobs available were secretarial, and if you weren't a secretary you couldn't necessarily work in the Embassy. But since then I think there have been more agreements between the U.S. and other countries so that the spouses can work. I know when we got to France there was a bilateral agreement. There was a limit of 16 and while I was there they increased it. So there are things happening. In Paris I chose not to work full-time regularly at the Embassy, wanting to stay free to enjoy Paris and to spend time with my children. Which is why I worked as a substitute teacher and did some community work. I kept reading the post newsletter and there were fascinating jobs available — in the Embassy, skilled professional-type jobs where even if you couldn't type you could probably find something very interesting to do.

So I think the State Department really has done a lot and is still doing a lot to help spouses. Of course, I know, it's first come first served. And as soon as Number One was transferred, there was another job opening, and the first person to apply got it — that's my understanding. I know this because I was interested in extending my substitute teaching from temporary to full-time, for which I would have needed to go through all of the process to get French working papers, and would have been one of the 16. But when I was applying the quota was filled and they were enlarging. I think a few months later it was enlarged but by then the school had found someone else for their permanent job. I do know that it was available — you can work if that is what you want, so you can probably find something similar.

Q: And there wasn't any work on the local economy. Probably that's not a good example.

BOWEN: That's probably the place where people complained.

Q: Where there was no answer.

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BOWEN: In Paris there was, and the difference was the country and the time period; it was a few years later. Well, even when we were in Bukavu, a friend of mine in Kinshasa said that every spouse who wanted to work was able to, within the Embassy or with USIS where a lot of people were teaching English, and she felt the morale was very good there then because everyone that wanted to work was able to work. They weren't working on the local economy.

Q: I believe the highest percentage of jobs are in Africa Embassies. I think it's probably very good.

BOWEN: Living in the U.S. and not being able to work is probably frustrating for many. That's probably one of the disadvantages of going overseas unless you have — in a profession like teaching, you don't really have to start at entry level. There is an agreement with Fairfax County that if you are teaching there and go overseas, when you come back you are given priority in job offers, as if you were still in the system.

Now they're also helping Foreign Service spouses going overseas to get a teaching certificate. I think there are only a few courses you need take if you have a college degree. Then if you go overseas and teach English as a second language or teach in a school there, that work experience applies for a Virginia certification, I think. There are a lot of agreements that the FLO office is trying to get with the Washington community, so that when spouses return they can continue without having to go back to entry level.

Our children are in public schools. We bought a house in Falls Church when we first came back from Africa 12 years ago. It was a very small house and it was a serious disappointment. We chose the tiny house rather than moving all the way out to live comfortably. It was a very, very small house. We kept it while we were overseas, and a year ago we moved into it. We knew that it was too small but while there we sold it and have recently moved to a slightly larger house, but because we had the house inside the Beltway, we could buy another one but only because I'm working part-time. If we were

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living on John's salary alone I don't think we could live comfortably in this larger house, we'd have to stay in the small one or move way, way out. So I think it's difficult. We have a part-time salary and a full-time salary and that's okay, we don't have the children in college yet so I don't know what that's going to be like. But I think this is the case with anyone, not just with Foreign Service people. You were speaking of exurbia being isolated because everyone's gone off to work. I think it's only the Foreign Service that has that problem.

Q: The woman who's here more or less permanently.

BOWEN: Is bringing in more, that's true. My part-time salary is entry level. I have a graduate degree and have been out of school for many years and I'm still working at an entry-level salary. So that's probably because of moving around but it's also because — I feel I partially chose to do this because of my children; and being in the Foreign Service I could do that because overseas we did have — I don't really “blame” my lack of career development on the Foreign Service. I feel, more, it's because I was fortunate, I could stay home with my children when they were little, or at least stay home most of the time. Still, by the time they were in school I could work at something, substitute teaching, which didn't require a lot of time and energy on my part, I was still available for them. Regular teachers have lesson plans and correcting papers, and that takes time. After the children come home, the teachers are still working.

Now we have contingent plans. We're here now for three more years. My oldest is a sophomore in high school. When she starts college, we'll probably go overseas again and my husband says he wants a place with (laughing) the biggest differential possible, but we're planning on something like that.

Our planning is something like that, I mean, working full-time. I'm working right now on a library degree and knowing that, when we go overseas there's a very good chance that I'll have no place to use it. I'm hoping to finish it before we leave because I'm only working on it part-time, but I can have a degree and go overseas and work again as a secretary or as

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substitute teacher, whatever I can do. But wherever we go overseas again I think I'll have to work full-time, with the oldest in college. And we have two more — at one point we'll have all three children in college. (both laugh) That's when we do have to find a differential post, that's not a joke. We haven't gotten into that yet, since they're not in college.

Q: But obviously it's in the back of your mind.

BOWEN: I told you we moved twice in the past year and my husband was so irritated with all the chores of moving — the packing and unpacking and hanging pictures, and he was saying he never wanted to move again, that was it. We'd been thinking about . . .

End of Tape 1, Side A
Begin Tape 1, SidB

BOWEN: (resuming mid-sentence) the pressures make people go overseas. That's if the spouse is not bringing in a very good salary. I think if I were bringing in a respectable salary and not just a little bit of money that helps, then we might be less inclined to go overseas, because you lose that. If I were earning a lot of money, and then I were to go to an Embassy where my salary were less, then that would change our points of view completely. Right now I earn so little that it doesn't matter; I would probably earn more overseas.

I think he would consider retiring early for something like that, definitely, if I had a career, a job where I was earning a lot of money and I really liked it; I think he would consider it. I think all along he's always been open to leaving the Service if something better turned up; I don't mean that he's not dedicated but — when we first bought our house, before the Foreign Service Act of 1980, his salary very, very low. Considering our family's size, we were practically at a salary eligible to receive free lunches at school. (both laugh)

Q: That should be put on tape, it really should, because that wasn't just you, that was everybody in your class.

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BOWEN: Yes, it was, because I wasn't working and we had three children. They sent a little letter around from the schools, and I remember looking at it one year and thinking, "Oh, but last year we fit!" We laughed but it wasn't funny then. And he was seriously looking for another job at that time, just because if he didn't earn enough to support his family in Washington, why stay? But then they did pass that Foreign Service Act and he received enough of an increase — we'd just bought a new house, so the mortgage became less in proportion to his salary, so that was OK. That was when, I think, I was able to do a little more tutoring and bring in a little bit of money. Another Foreign Service wife became a librarian later in her life and she said that her husband chose his last post, one in Canada, so that she could go to school and get a library degree. She's very young but she's now working full-time in a law school library and her husband has retired.

Q: And if he's happy doing that sort of thing, that's fine.

BOWEN: [In my generation a lot} of people, a lot of men would be willing to retir[early]. We're kind of planning that when my husband does retire, he'll retire fairly young and that will be my chance to work, you know. By then I should have a library degree and go wherever m[job takes us].

Q: I think women now have choices and some of them are taking that option.

BOWEN: I guess — mostly I have friends my age, but I don't see anyone pressured to have children and stay at home. All I see are financial pressures for women to work. In this area I don't think women have a choice to stay at home. I think, if they want a house, a nice house, they have to work. I don't know of any pressures for women to stay at home.

BIOGRAPHIC DATA

Spouse: John W. Bowen, IV

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Spouse Entered Service:1974Left Service: You Entered Service:1974Left Service:

Status: Spouse of FSO

Spouse's Position: Economic Officer Posts: 9/74-11/74Washington, DC
11/74-11/76Bogota, Colombia 2/77-5/79Bukavu, Zaire 1979-7/83Washington, DC
7/83-7/87Brasilia, Brazil 9/87-7/90Paris, France 7/90-Washington, DC

Place/Date of birth: Jewell, Iowa, 9/30/47

Maiden Name: Heise

Parents (Name, Profession):

Carl A. Heise, Jr., physician

Florence A. Heise, teacher

Schools (Prep, University):

U of Texas at Austin - BA, Spanish and English, 1969; MA, 1973

Profession: Studying to be a Librarian

Date/Place of Marriage: Austin, Texas, 9/30/72

Children:

Joanne (2/17/76)

Andrew (10/28/77)

Rachel (9/24/79)

Library of Congress

Volunteer and Paid Positions A. At Post: Paris - Substitute teacher, American School of Paris 1987-89; Receptionist and data entry, Paris Air Show 1989; Membership chair, Paris Embassy Group 1988-89, and Tours chair 1989-90. Brasilia - Secretary for AID Director 1983-85; Librarian, Embassy Tape Club 1985; Substitute teacher, American School of Brasilia (EAB) 1986-87; Vice president (acting President for 5 months), American Women's Club of Brasilia 1986-87; PTA Secretary, EAB 1984-85. Bukavu -Private tutor in English as a Second Language. Bogota - Tutor and free lance Translator; Substitute teacher at American School; Teacher of English as a Second Language.

B. In Washington, DC: At present, Library assistant, American Management Systems, Inc., Rosslyn, Va.; Part-time student in library school; Volunteer, Graham Road Preschool; After school Spanish Teacher, Fairfax County; Private tutor, English as a Second Language; Organizer, baby sitting co-op 1979-83; File supervisor, Dept. of Agriculture; Substitute teacher in Fairfax County 1973-74

End of interview